THE Speedy Coming OF CHRIST to Judgment,

Repreſented in a

FUNERAL SERMON,

On the Death of

Mr. *Benjamin Aſhurſt*,

Who deceaſed the 11*th* of *September*, 1687.

By *William Bates*, D. D.

LONDON,

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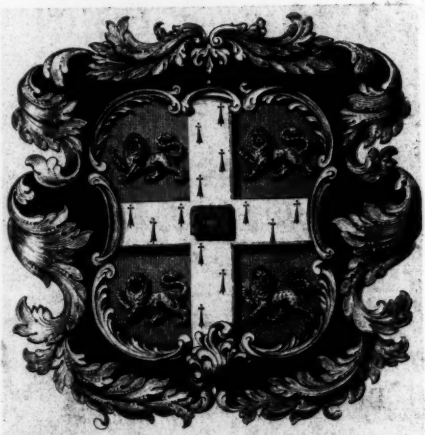

Academiæ Cantabrigiensis
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To his Honour'd Friend,

HENRY ASHURT, *Esq*;

SIR,

I Have complied with your desire in publishing the following Sermon upon the Death of your Dear Brother. The Soveraign Disposer of all things has been pleased to take away in a few Years several Persons very near to you in the Consanguinity of Nature,

and younger than your Self: a ſolemn Call to remember you, that the laſt Day of your preſent Life is approaching that will be attended with its Night, and to excite you to prepare for your great Change from Time to Eternity. You have indeed peculiar Obligations and Encouragement to be Religious in a degree of Eminence; whoſe Father was ſo bright a Light, and Guide to all

his Relations in the Everlasting Way, by his Holy Counsels and Heavenly Conversation. Of him I could speak many excellent Things, were not his Goodness so universally known, that Detraction it self could never fasten an unworthy Imputation upon him.

It shall suffice to give this short Character of him sincerely: He was adorn'd with all Di-

vine Graces, and by their conſpicuous Exerciſe was ſingularly eminent among the Saints. He made ſo particular an Application of that general Precept, Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, with all thy Strength, and with all thy Mind, *as if it had been ſolely given to himſelf: the Love of God inflam'd his Heart, and ſhin'd in his Life*

Life. This made him one day in a week (beſides that which is Sacred by Divine Appointment) to withdraw himſelf from the Buſineſs of the World, that he might more freely enjoy Communion with the bleſſed Object of his Spiritual Deſires. His Piety was in Conjunction with all thoſe Vertues that are requiſite to accompliſh a Chriſtian: Temperance and Purity of Manners, Juſtice and

Equity in his Commerce with others, and thoſe Vertues that caſt a more lively Luſtre, and have an attractive force upon Men. A rare Humility, an amiable Meekneſs, condeſcending Affability and Sweetneſs, compaſſionate Charity and Beneficence to the Souls and Bodies of Men, were really exhibited in his Deportment and Actions. He was ſo lovely in his Converſation, ſo loving to

all

all, that he was beloved of all. The uniform and regular Tenor of his Life obtain'd this Teſtimony, that was given to our Bleſſed Maſter, he did all things well. *A conſtant Serenity reigned in his Countenance, the viſible ſign of the Divine Calm in his Breaſt,* the Peace of God that paſſes Underſtanding. *And for an entire Conformity to our Saviour, that the Image of his meek ſuffering*

Evil,

Evil, as well as his zealous doing Good, might radiantly appear in this choſen Saint, the Divine Providence call'd him forth to a very ſharp Tryal; for being under the afflicting Severities of the Stone, and by the Advice of his dear Friends perſwaded to ſubmit to the dangerous Remedy of Cutting, with what reſigned Submiſſion did he yield himſelf to the Will of God? With

With what Tranquillity did he expect the iſſue either of ſurviving or dying? You remember his words before that terrible Operation, When I walk through the Valley of the ſhadow of Death, I will fear no Evil: *When ſo great a Wound was made in his Fleſh as an open paſſage for Death to enter, and ſuch cruel pains followed as ſtruck the Spectators with trembling, he endur'd them with*

an

an inspired Patience and Constancy. Thus God was pleased to perfect dear his Servant by Sufferings.

Your descent from such a Father should be a powerful Incentive to you to imitate his admirable Example: you should consider whose Name you bear: to be a faint Copy of so bright an Original, as it is below your Duty, so I am perswaded will not

not ſatisfy your Affections. Methinks a ſacred Ambition ſhould inflame you to excel in all Holineſs and Godlineſs, *that the living Image of your Father's Graces may be clearly viſible in your Perſon and Converſation. Proceed, dear Sir, in the everlaſting way, wherein you are ſo happily advanced; be always aſpiring, and with Zeal endeavouring to obtain the Celeſtial Prize. I unfeignedly*

feignedly recommend your self, your Excellent Lady, and your Family to the Divine Blessing. I am with great Respect,

Sir,

Your affectionate and faithful Servant,

W. BATES.

Books newly printed for J. Robinſon *at the Golden Lion in St.* Paul's *Church-Yard.*

A Short Deſcription of the Bleſſed Place and State of the Saints above, in a Diſcourſe on the words of our Bleſſed Saviour, *Joh.* 14. 2. Preached on occaſion of the Death of the Reverend Mr. *David Clarkſon.* By *Will. Bates*, D. D.

The Way to the Higheſt Honour, a Funeral Sermon on *John* 12. 26. Preached upon the Deceaſe of the Reverend Dr. *Tho. Jacomb.* By the ſame Author.

A Plain Repreſentation of Tranſubſtantiation, as it is received in the Church of *Rome*, with the Sandy Foundations it is built upon, and the Arguments that clearly evert and overturn it.

Errata

Errata corrigenda.

PAg. 8. line 5. for *was*, read *be*. l. 7. f. *Appetite*, r. *Appetites*. P. 11. l. 18. f. *conveyed*, r. *conceived*. P. 25. l. 6. f. *'tis*, r. *til*. P. 28. l. 6. f. *Judgment*, r. *Judgments*. P. 65. l. 3. f. *Atheist*, r. *Atheists*.

There is now in the Press the Third Edition of Dr. *Bates*'s Harmony of the Divine Attributes, *&c.*

REV.

REVEL. xxii. 12.

And he ſaid, behold, I come quickly, and my Reward is with me, to give every Man according as his Work ſhall be.

THESE words were ſpoke by the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the ſupream Judg of the World, upon his finiſhing the Revelation to St. *John*. In them we may obſerve, 1. An Excitation, *Behold*. 2. The Cœleſtial Object, *I come quickly*. 3. The End of his Coming, *my Reward is with me, to render to every one according to his Works.*

'Tis obſervable that the prophetical Notice of the Lord's coming to Judgment is uſhered in with great Solemnity: Thus *Enoch* the ſeventh from *Adam*, foretelling his Judiciary Appearance, ſaid, *Behold, the Lord comes with ten thouſand of his Saints, to execute Judgment upon all*: and the Circumſtance of the ſuddenneſs of his Coming, is uſed as a powerful Motive to awaken our drowſy Spirits, and fix our ſcatter'd Minds intirely on this ſo eminent an Object. So the Apoſtle *James* gives an awful Admonition, *Behold, the Judg ſtands before the door* ready to paſs a final Sentence. And

And St. *John* breaks forth in an Extaſy at this admirable Spectacle, *Behold, he comes with Clouds, and every Eye ſhall ſee him, and they which pierced him*: And the everlaſting Judg himſelf aſſures us of his ſpeedy Coming with this Preface, *Behold, I come quickly.* The words contain this Propoſition.

'Tis our high Wiſdom and Duty, to repreſent by actual and ſolemn thoughts the certain and ſpeedy Coming of Chriſt to the righteous Judgment of the World.

I will illuſtrate and prove this Doctrine in this order.

First; Consider what is revealed in the Scripture of his certain coming to Judgment.

Secondly; The circumstance of Time, his coming quickly.

Thirdly; The Rewards he will then immediately distribute.

Fourthly; The respective difference of the Rewards, according to the Actions of Men in this Life. And then apply it.

First; In the managing the first Point, I shall not insist upon the Proofs of a future Judgment, but only direct to the Fountains of Arguments that are demonstrative to atten-

attentive and unperverted Minds.

'Tis a Doctrine of Natural Reaſon and Divine Faith: if we conſider the eſſential and neceſſary Perfections of God, or the Frame of Man, we muſt ſtrongly infer his accountableneſs for his Actions. There is an eſſential Subordination between Man and his Divine Maker, and being endowed with Underſtanding and free Faculties, 'tis becoming the Wiſdom of God to govern him by a Law, to regulate his Choice and Actions: This is the Rule that diſtinguiſhes between Vertue and Vice, and the Holineſs, Juſtice, and Goodneſs of God

are infallible aſſurances to us, that there will be Recompences according to the diverſity of Mens Actions, either conforming or tranſgreſſing his Laws. Beſides, every Man has an internal Sentiment, a judicial Impreſſion in his Breaſt of this great Truth. Conſcience, the inſeparable Faculty of the reaſonable Soul, has a directing and reflecting Light, to ſhew us our Duty, to examine our Actions, and accordingly to excuſe and comfort, or to accuſe and terrify; which Acts neceſſarily imply, that 'tis deputed by the Supream Judg of the World, to obſerve our ways in order to its final Teſtimony before

before his Tribunal. This Proof is the more convincing and palpable, in that thoſe Perſons who are exempted from humane Judgment by their Power and Dignity, thoſe who are above Reproof, and by a fatal Priviledg damn themſelves with leſs contradiction than others, yet are not impenetrable to the ſtings of Conſcience, but at times have a conſcious feeling of their Guilt: and in thoſe who have ſo far ſtupified Conſcience, that 'tis either ſilent, or ſpeaks with a low Voice, yet when they are in diſtreſs, eſpecially in the approaches of Death, Conſcience recovers Life and Vigor, ſets their

Sins in order before them, and flaſhes the Terrors of future Judgment in their faces; an evident preſage that altho Conſcience was not ſtrong enough to controul their licentious Appetite here, it will be ſtrong enough for their Conviction and Torment hereafter.

Now Divine Revelation renews the decayed Notions of the future Judgment that are natural to the Minds of Men, and confirms them againſt the oppoſition of the Carnal Faculties, it regulates and enlarges them, with reſpect to the Certainty and Circumſtances of it, who ſhall be Judg, and the manner

ner of his coming, and transacting the Affairs of the great Day.

I will more particularly insist upon the certain coming of Jesus Christ in Person to judg the World; and for the orderly discourse of it, 'tis observable that a double coming of Christ is foretold in Scripture: The first in a low Condition; the second in a glorious State. The ends of his first and second coming regulate their manner: The *Messias* came at first, to be the Mediatour between the righteous God and sinful Man, by patient suffering the most afflictive Evils; to propitiate the incensed Justice of Heaven against

againſt us; to reſtore us by Humility who fell by Pride; To illuſtrate his ſignal Love to us, to recommend by the efficacy of his Example, the meek Suffering all the tranſient Evils of the World: But the ſecond will be to perform the laſt Act of his Regal Office, to determine the eternal States of Angels and Men, and ſuitably in the Glory of his Deity. The Divine Oracles were never leſs obſcure than in deſcribing the firſt and ſecond coming of the *Meſſias*; the Eclipſes of the Sun of Righteouſneſs, and his future Glory: and the moſt clear accompliſhment of them in his Humiliation, is a convincing viſible

viſible Argument they ſhall be fulfilled in his Exaltation. Now in regard his lowly Obedience, and ſorrowful Sufferings, are the Titles to his Triumph, and the height of his Glory ſhall be anſwerable to his extream Debaſement; I will briefly compare his firſt and ſecond Coming.

His firſt Coming *was in the likeneſs of ſinful Fleſh*: tho he was exempt from the rebellious Sin of our firſt Parents, and the poiſonous tincture that is derived to their common Race, being miraculouſly conveyed by the Holy Ghoſt, yet he was charged with the Frailties, and expoſed to thoſe Afflictions that are

are the Penalties of Sin. His first reception in the World was so mean, that if Poverty it self had assum'd a visible Appearance, it could not be received more poorly. He was born in a Stable, and died on the Cross, the humble Poverty of his beginning was not discordant from his ignominious End: and his Life from his first Breath to his last in the World, was a course through Poverty, Disgrace, Injuries, Indignities, and the most cruel Sufferings. He was made not only lower than the Angels, but than the lowest of Men: In the lan-

Psal. 22. guage of his Type, *a Worm and no Man.* In this poor, weak, and

and contemptible State, darkned with the Clouds of Sorrows, O how unlike to him, who appeared in a Cœleſtial Viſion to the Prophet *Eſay*, ſitting *upon a Throne high and lifted up*, and the glorious Seraphims in a poſture of Reverence about him, and in an Extaſy of Admiration crying, *one to another*, *Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of Hoſts, the whole Earth is full of his Glory.* Iſa. 6. Joh. 12. 41.

Carnal Eyes could not diſcover the Son of God in the Son of Man ſo vilified and afflicted. The words of the Prophet are juſtly applicable to him in the ſtate of his Humiliation, *Verily thou art a God* Iſa. 45. 15.

God that hideſt thy ſelf, O God of Iſrael the Saviour.

Now to all thoſe ſteps of our Saviour s depreſſion in his firſt coming, are correſpondent the degrees of his Exaltation in his ſecond coming. He ſhall come the ſecond time from the higheſt Heaven the true Sanctuary of God, and appear *without Sin*, having perfectly expiated it by his Sufferings on Earth. His firſt coming was in *Diſhonour*, his *ſecond ſhall be in Glory*. He came at firſt on foot, in *the form of a Servant*, then he ſhall come *in the form of God*, riding on the bright Clouds, *and all the Chariots of God, the* Pſal. 68. 17. *Angels of Light attending him.*

He

He ſhall come in *the Glory of his Father*, in the viſible brightneſs of the Deity. The Rods, the Thorns, the Nails, the Croſs, all the conſpiring Inſtruments of his cruel and diſgraceful Sufferings ſhall be exchanged for the Enſigns of Majeſty: His Sacred Head ſhall be crown'd with Glory, of which the Sun in its Luſtre is but a dark ſhadow; *a Scepter of Righteouſneſs ſhall be in his hand*, he ſhall ſit on a *great white Throne*, the Emblem of his unſpotted Holineſs.

His firſt coming was *in Weakneſs*, but his ſecond ſhall be *in Power*. Thus he told his Enemies, *Hereafter ſhall ye ſee the Son of Man ſitting* Mat. 26. 64.

ting on the right-hand of Power, and coming in the Clouds of Heaven. His Voice ſhall break the ſilence of the Grave, and all that are in the bowels of the Earth, or the bottom of the Sea, ſhall come forth;

Joh. 28. 29. *they that have done good, unto the Reſurrection of Life; they that have done evil, to the Reſurrection of Damnation.* By his Omnipotence *he will change our vile*

Phil. 3. 21. *Bodies, that they may be faſhioned like to his Glorious Body.* As Gold at firſt taken out of the Mine, ſeems but common Earth, but by the refining Fire has a Brightneſs ſuperinduced, that it ſeems rather the product of the Fire, than from the Vein of the Earth from whence

whence it was taken: Thus our Bodies that in their Original are but *Earth*; *from the Earthly Adam*; ſhall by the *Power of the Lord from Heaven* be made heavenly, clothed with a living Luſtre and Vigor. He will then convent the *God of this World*, with all the inviſible Legions of rebellious Spirits, and force their Submiſſion to his High Tribunal. He will diſſolve the old World, and raiſe the new: *from his Face the Earth and the Heaven ſhall flee away, and there ſhall be no place found for them. According to his Promiſe we look for new Heavens, and a new Earth, wherein dwells Righteouſneſs.*

Briefly, in his first coming he was *despised and rejected of Men*, condemned and crucified, but then he shall be revealed from Heaven with *his mighty Angels, in flaming Fire, to take Vengeance upon all that know not God, and disobey the Gospel.* How will the wicked be surpriz'd *with the Terrors of the Lord?* At the promulgation of the Law, the Senses of Hearing and Seeing, that are the inlets of Terror, were so strongly affected with the Presence of God, when fearful Lightnings were darted from his Eyes, and Clouds of Smoke came from the Breath of his Nostrils, and at the *loud sounding of the Trumpet,* and

and *the quaking of the Mountain*; that the Hearts of the Spectators were ready to die within them, and *Moſes* himſelf was *terribly afraid*; but how will the Sights and Sounds at the laſt day overwhelm the guilty with Terrors, when the Son of God ſhall appear *in his terrible Majeſty*! when the *Arch-angel ſhall blow the Trumpet of God*, when the Pillars of Heaven ſhall fall, and the Foundations of the Earth be overthrown, and a dreadful Judgment ſhall paſs upon the impenitent Tranſgreſſors of the eternal Law! how will they appear ſpiritleſs, in ſad Confuſion in *the great Day of the Lord Almighty*?

Secondly; We are to conſider the Circumſtance of Time, *his coming quickly.* 'Tis verified by univerſal Experience, that no carnal Principle does more fortify Sinners in a falſe Security, *than putting the evil day far from them*, and the Preſumption that they are not in preſent danger of God's Diſpleaſure, when inevitable and great Evils are look'd upon as remote, they make a ſlite Impreſſion, but the Propinquity of ſuch Evils inſpires Terrors. We have an Inſtance of this in *Cain*, who (after God had denounced his Puniſhment for his bloody crying Sin) full of Perplexity

ty and Diſpair breaks forth, *My Puniſhment is greater than I can bear! and it ſhall come to paſs, that every one that findeth me, ſhall ſlay me.* But when he was ſecured from preſent Revenge, and expected a long Life in this World, he freely indulged his ſenſual Deſires, and *built a City*, to drown the noiſe of his accuſing Conſcience. The World follows this way of *Cain*, and freely purſues the Satisfaction of their Luſts. When Men look upon the Divine Judgment at an immenſe diſtance, and *when the evil Servant ſhall ſay in his Heart, my Lord delays his coming*, he will ſatisfy both the angry and voluptuous Appe- Mat. 24.

tites, he *will ſmite his fellow-Servants, and eat and drink with the drunken.* To awaken therefore Mens drowſy Spirits to prepare for the Judgment of the great Day, to check their exorbitant Luſts, *their Laſciviouſneſs, exceſs of Wine*, and *Reveling* 'tis threatened, *they ſhall give an account of them, to him who is ready to judg the Quick and the Dead.* And to induce a patient Temper and aſſwage Sorrow, the Apoſtle *James* encourages afflicted Chriſtians, *that the Judg ſtands before the door.*

1 Pet. 14. 1, 3.

There is a ſeeming difficulty how to reconcile the Predictions of Chriſt's ſudden coming to Judgment, with the interval of ſo many intire

intire Ages laps'd ſince, and what may remain of Time before the laſt Day is uncertain. This difficulty will be reſolved by conſidering the following Particulars.

1. The words of the Text are to be underſtood in the ſtrict literal Senſe: For our Saviour having repreſented in a viſionary Scene the State of the Church in the ſeveral Periods of its Duration to the end of the World, its Conflicts, Victory, and Triumph over Antichriſtian Enemies, and having deſcribed the Tranquillity, Purity and Glory of the Church in the very laſt part of Time, which is preparative to the glorious

everlasting State in the next World, he declares, *I come* Rev. 22. 5. *quickly, and my Reward is with me*: After the final accomplishment of those Prophecies, there is no more use of Time, *the unjust, and unrighteous, and filthy*, continue unchang'd and impenitent; *the* Esa. 22. 1. Micah. 7. 1. Heb. 1. *righteous and holy* are confirm'd in their Perseverance, and immediately shall receive Recompences according to their Works.

2. The whole flux of Time, from the first to the second coming of Christ is called the *last days*. The Prophets foretold of an astonishing Change that should arrive in the Church and the World, that the Ceremo-

remonial Law ſhould be aboliſh'd, when the *Meſſias*, the Subſtance of it, and Perfection was come, and a new Covenant be immutably eſtabliſh'd in the Church, 'tis the final expiring of Time. In this Senſe the Apoſtle ſpeaks to Chriſtians in the firſt Age of the Church; *Now all theſe things happened unto them for Examples, and they are writen for our Admonition, upon whom the Ends of the World are come.* 1 Cor. 10. 11. Now in the diviſion of Time, this being the laſt part of it, for the duration of the World, the ſecond coming of Chriſt is repreſented as near. The laſt Glaſs of Time was turn'd up at the Revelation of the Goſpel

Gospel by the Son of God, and now the last Sands are running; when 'tis out, it shall never be turned more.

3. Sometimes the speedy coming of Christ to Judgment immediately respects the destruction of the Jewish State, and their principal City. Thus in his last Sermon on Mount *Olivet*, the Temple being in his view, he foretold *that one Stone shall not be left upon another*: And after his describing the fearful Events that should surprize that Nation, tells his Disciples, *Verily I say unto you, this Generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.* The time of this Judgment, is *called the great*

Mat. 24. 24.

great and illuſtrious Day of the Lord, when by viſible Vengeance upon that Nation, he declar'd his Divine Power and Glory before the World. And to this famous Deſtruction of the Jews, may refer ſeveral places, where the Apoſtle encourages Believers to unfainting perſeverance in their Duty, notwithſtanding the cruel Oppoſition they met with from Infidels of the Jewiſh Nation: *Not forſaking the aſſembling of our ſelves, as the manner of ſome is, but exhort one another, and ſo much the more as ye ſee the day approaching*; that is, when Chriſt will appear for the ſubduing his Enemies, and for the relieving his People. Acts 2. 20. Heb. 10.

4. We

4. We must distinguish between the Judgment of Sense and of Faith, and this will rectify our estimate of the time of God's particular Judgment upon Earth, and of his universal Judgment when he will distribute eternal Recompences. To Sense *Afflictions seem not only grievous*, but often they seem long: for Sorrow fastens the Thoughts upon the Affliction; in sharp Pains the Soul is as it were confined to the diseased part, and strictly observes all the hours and smaller parts of their Duration, which when we are at ease slip away without notice. In distress we would fain hasten away the pre-

preſent time, expecting Relief by what ſhall ſucceed: and winged time ſeems ſlow in its motion. From hence are ſo many doleful Complaints of the Saints, *Lord, how long? Lord, make haſte:* as if he had forgot to be gracious to relieve them, and juſt to repay their cruel Enemies. But Faith in the Divine Promiſes looks to their accompliſhment in the time ſet by the moſt wiſe and holy diſpoſer of all things. A ſtedfaſt Believer never counts God ſlow in coming to Judgment; for he is never too late. *The Viſion of the Churches Deliverance is for an appointed time, but at the end it ſhall ſpeak and not lie; tho* Pſal. 70. 8, 9.

it

it tarry, wait for it, becauſe it will ſurely come, it will not tarry. This is applied by the Apoſtle to the particular Judgment upon *Jeruſalem*; and is applicable to the univerſal Judgment: *For yet a little while, and he that ſhall come will come, and will not tarry: tho he bears long with the Sufferings of his own Elect, yet he will avenge them ſpeedily*: At the prefixed time, when the number of the Elect ſhall be compleat, and all the *Veſſels of Wrath are fitted for Deſtruction*, the diſcerning Judg will come and ſeparate them for ever.

Heb. 10.

5. Compare Time with Eternity. Time is numbred and diſtinguiſhed by the Motions

tions of the Sun and Moon, and is accounted long or ſhort by us with reſpect to our tranſient and limited Duration in the preſent World: but Eternity is an endleſs Duration. The whole ſpace of Time, from the firſt Motions of the Heavens to the laſt, has not that proportion to Eternity, as a ſhort Span has to the vaſt Compaſs of the Heaven. Now God, who is abſolutely eternal, and truly infinite, meaſures the continuance of things by his own Standard: accordingly the Pſalmiſt tells us, *A thouſand Years in his ſight, are but as yeſterday when it is paſt, and as a Watch in the Night*: as Pſal. 90. 4.

the

the ſpace of a few hours that paſſes without the leaſt perception in ſleep. God comforts his ſuffering Church: *for a ſmall moment have I forſaken thee, but with great Mercy will I gather thee: In a little Wrath I hid my face from thee, but with everlaſting Kindneſs will I have Mercy on thee.* St. *Peter* replies to the Infidels of the laſt days, who ſcornfully ſay, *Where is the Promiſe of his coming? One day with the Lord is as a thouſand Years, and a thouſand Years as one day*: all the meaſures of Time are determin'd in Eternity. This eſtimate will reconcile the two ſeeming oppoſite Durations, the long delaying, and the

Eſa. 54. 7, 8.

2 Pet. 3.

the ſpeedy coming of the Judg.

If a Malefactor be taken, ſentenc'd and executed in a day, 'tis quick Juſtice: Now the longeſt time conſidered in God's Duration is no more than the ſhorteſt among Men. And the Application of this is more ſenſible and evident, with reſpect to the particular Judgment that immediately attends the Death of Men, whether graciouſly rewarding, or juſtly puniſhing them: *The Afflictions of the Saints are but for a moment,* 2 Cor. 4. compared with the eternal State of Glory they enter into: and tho an impenitent Sinner live to extream Age,

yet *his Judgment did not ſlumber*, but was haſtning, for his Death, that is the end of an hundred Years on Earth, will be to him the beginning of an hundred thouſand Years in Hell, attended with an endleſs Duration after.

Thirdly; We are to conſider the Rewards he will then immediately diſtribute. What the Rewards ſhall be in their general nature we may underſtand, but the degrees of Happineſs or Miſery in the future State are beyond the utmoſt comprehenſion of our Thoughts, or expreſſions of our Words. A Child may as ſoon be inſtructed to underſtand

ſtand and relate the deepeſt Counſels of a Senate; as a mortal Man can fully conceive or explicate what Heaven or Hell is. The Judg ſtiles it *my Reward, who is the great God and our Saviour*: and 'tis correſpondent to his infinite Goodneſs and Bounty, or to his terrible Majeſty and offended Juſtice. Who can unfold the Treaſures of his Love, or the Treaſures of his Wrath? *Who knows the Power of his Anger?* Tho no Reſemblance be capable to expreſs fully the ſoveraign Felicity, and the extream Miſery in the future State, yet for our Inſtruction they are ſet forth in the moſt intelli-

gible and affecting manner with reſpect to our narrow Capacities. The Reward of the Saints is a State of Glory and Joy in the Preſence of the bleſſed God, the Fountain of true Felicity. The Apoſtle aſſures us, that thoſe who continue in well-doing ſhall be *rewarded with Glory, and Honour, and Immortality.* The Reward is ſhadowed forth by choſen Compariſons, a *Crown of Glory, a Crown of Life:* by the Joys of a *Marriage Feſtival* that ſhall be celebrated in the City of God. In ſhort, the Reward contains the higheſt Perfection and exceeding Satisfaction of the reaſonable Nature.

Rom. 2.

Nature. Our moſt beautiful Expreſſions darken the Eternal Brightneſs of that State: Heaven is infinitely better known by one minutes Enjoyment, than by the Deſcription of the Divineſt Orator.

The Recompence from revenging Juſtice is ſet forth by words of the heavieſt Signification: by *Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguiſh*: and by moſt fearful Repreſentations, to typify the Torments of the Damned: *by the Worm that never dies, and the Fire that ſhall never be quenched*: by the blackneſs of Darkneſs for ever, and the bottomleſs Gulph of Horror and Miſe- Rom. 2.

ry. Briefly, as the bleſſed Reward eminently contains all thoſe Joys, of which we have but dark ſhadows here, ſo the Puniſhment is more extream and fearful than the literal meaning of the moſt violent Figures expreſs. This Reward he ſaith *is with him.* This I ſhall conſider in three things.

1. 'Tis a preſent Reward. Here the Saints have a ſure Title to *the immortal and undefiled Inheritance; a right to the Tree of Life. He that hath the Son, hath everlaſting Life*: an unfeigned Faith that *unites us to Chriſt, that purifies the Heart and Converſation, and works by Love to our Redeemer,* ſecures to

us

us an intire Intereſt in the Kingdom of Glory, both upon the account of the Purchaſe of it by the ſacred Treaſure of Chriſt's Blood, and the unchangeable Tenor of the Goſpel, wherein God promiſes Heaven to all obedient Believers: but the actual beſtowing of this upon their entire Perſons, is not till the laſt day. Then the King *will ſay to them on his Right-hand, come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World.* He will crown them with his own Hands, and imediately introduce them *into his own Joys.*

Now Sentence is paſt upon thoſe who diſobey the Goſpel; *he that believes not, is condemned already*, but the Execution of it is ſuſpended for a while. Tho ſinful Men are guilty of ſuch violent Provocations as would conquer all created Patience, yet their Judg endures with much long-ſuffering *the Veſſels of Wrath fitted for Deſtruction. He is the God of Patience*, 'tis one of the Divine Attributes, and cannot be violated by the Indignities of rebellious Sinners, but has its *perfect Work* in this lower World. He ever enjoys the Serenity and Bleſſedneſs that is inſeparable from the Perfections of his own Na-

Nature, and ſpares the wicked for a time in order to their Salvation: but when he comes to Judgment, the Execution will immediately follow: For the Sentence will be peremptory and final; there can be no Appeal from it: The Son ſhall then appear with equal Majeſty and Authority with the Father: *All Judgment is committed to him*: And his Power to execute the definitive Sentence is irreſiſtible, we may read the Tenor of it, *Take him, bind him hand and foot, and caſt him into outer Darkneſs*: there is no poſſible eſcape by flight from his righteous Fury, no poſſible reſiſtance of his Almighty

mighty Power, but the Wicked ſhall preſently ſuffer the decreed Vengeance.

2. The Reward is compleat: for it ſhall be the iſſue of final Judgment, with reſpect to *all things done in the Body, whether good or evil.* Separate Souls act in their oppoſite States: the Saints above continually glorify God, and do his Commands: The wicked in Hell continually blaſpheme God: but the obedience of the Saints in Heaven is not in order to a Reward, for they are actually poſſeſt of it, and compleat Holineſs is a principal part of their Felicity: and the Sins of the Damned do not incur a new Guilt,

Guilt, and expoſe them to more Severities of Puniſhment, for they are in the hands of revenging Juſtice, and their Sin is a principal part of their Puniſhment. The Rewardableneſs of Humane Actions is limited to the preſent Life; and when Men ſhall appear before the Judgment Seat of Chriſt, a full Reward will be diſtributed to them.

Here the faithful Servants of God have ſome Vails to encourage them in their Work, and to delight in their Duty: and in their various Sorrows and Sufferings they are cheared with ſome forerunning Beams of Heavenly Light,

Light, revived with the Air of Paradiſe, refreſh'd with Waters of Life from the ſacred Springs of Comfort, the Promiſes of God, *and rejoyce in the hope of Glory:* but then they are received into God's glorious Preſence, *where there is fulneſs of Joy, and Rivers of Pleaſure for ever.* What Defect can there be in their Happineſs when they are entred into *the Joy of their Lord, and Joy enters into them* repleniſhing all their Faculties?

Here the wicked feel ſome beginnings of Sorrows, the twinges of an accuſing Conſcience that ſettles into the undying Worm: The firſt Breath of God's Indignation ſome-

ſometimes ſinges them here: but then the Flames of it will break forth with vehemence: in this World his Diſpenſation is a Compound of Juſtice and Mercy, he is unwilling to uſe Extremity: when he is exceedingly provok'd, Mercy mollifies the Rigor of Juſtice, calms the Fierceneſs of his Wrath, lightens the Weight of his Power: he *does not reward them according to their Iniquities*: but then nothing will break the blow of his Revenging Hands: Strict Juſtice will then inflict a Puniſhment commenſurate to the guilt of their Sins. All the leading Faculties of the Soul, the Mind, the Fancy, the

the Memory, the Will, the Affections, that have been polluted with Sin, all the ſenſitive Faculties of the Body that have been inſtrumental in the commiſſion of Sin, ſhall be tormented. The voluptuous Wretch, whoſe Soul was drown'd in Fleſh and Blood, and riotouſly feaſted every day, his Tongue was tormented in the Fire.

Briefly, Pain is more intenſe and violent according to the Capacity of the Patient, and the Activity and Impreſſion of the Agent: Thus in the Body thoſe parts that are of the quickeſt and moſt tender Senſe, are moſt receptive of Pain; and when ſharp

ſharp and piercing Humours fall upon them, are vehemently affected: How great ſhall be the Puniſhment, when the intire Man the Soul and Body are prepared to be moſt capable of Torment, and Infinite Power inflict it? *weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth*, extream Sorrow, and extream Rage, are the Characters of Damnation. O doleful State beyond all poſſible Expreſſion!

3. The Reward is perpetual: 'tis the iſſue of *Eternal Judgment*: The Sentence is fixt and unalterable for ever. The *Saints ſhall ever be with the Lord*, whoſe Preſence is the living Fountain of Felicity.

licity. Their Bodies ſhall be endowed with a Cœleſtial unfading Beauty and Vigor becoming the glorious Quality of the Sons of God: their Souls ſhall for ever be ſatisfied with the ſight of his Glory, and raviſh'd with the Fruition of his Love. There is no defect in that bleſſed State, and no danger of loſing it. The Love of God towards his elect Veſſels of Mercy is as unchangeable as his Nature: and the Divine Beauty fixes the flame of their pure Affections upon the Deity: They enjoy an everlaſting Communion with him. Eternity crowns and conſummates their Happineſs.

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The wicked are excommunicated from the Beatifical Presence of God, and the joyful Society of the Saints for ever. They are imprison'd in Hell during the Displeasure of the Immortal King, who is inflexibly angry, and irreconcileable for ever In the present State violent Pains or Passions extinguish Life, as a fierce Fire devours the matter that feeds it: The natural Body could not endure the Torments of Hell a moment, the frail Tabernacle of Flesh would presently be dissolved: But the Divine Power will uphold the damned in vivacity to feel infernal Torments. Here there are

intermiſſions and pauſes between the ſtrokes of God's Hand; even *Pharoah* that proud Rebel was indulg'd at times, to lead him to Repentance: but there is an unceſſant perpetuity of Torments: the obſtinate Sons of Darkneſs are without eaſe or end of their Miſery.

Fourthly, We are to conſider the reſpective difference of the Rewards, according to the Actions of Men in this Life: and that with reſpect to the kinds whether good or evil, and the degrees of good and evil in them. He will then lay *Judgment to the Line, and Righteouſneſs to the Plummet*,

met, and bring *every Work to Judgment, whether good or evil.* Eccleſ. 12. 14. He will try our good Works incluſively, with our Principles, and Aims, and Affections, wherein their ſpiritual value conſiſts. He alone has exact Scales to *weigh the Spirits of Men*, a Divine Faculty to ſee the deepeſt Seeds of their Actions. When Religious Duties, when Acts of Charity and of any Vertue are performed in Obedience to God, to pleaſe and glorify him, they ſhall be rewarded accordingly: but when done from Carnal Motives, for our own Reputation, our own Intereſt or Pleaſure, the Judg will then declare, *I have*

Rev. 3. 2. *not found your Works full before me*: tho never so specious and glittering in the Eyes and esteem of Men, tho appearing with a great show of Goodness, yet without the internal Exercise of gracious Affections that are the Life of Obedience, they are of no account in that day. According to the Sincerity, Zeal, and measure of our good Works, the Reward shall be: *He that sows sparingly, shall reap sparingly*; 2 Cor. 9. 6. *and he that sows bountifully, shall reap bountifully.* This Rule of Judgment does not in the least imply that there is any desert of the Reward in the best Works of Men: the Scrip-

Scripture is moſt expreſs, *that Eternal Life is the Gift of God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*: The Kingdom of Glory is infinitely more a Gift than a Reward.

As the Predeſtination of the Saints to Life is an Act of Soveraign Mercy; ſo the Glorification of them is an Act of equally free Mercy, without reſpect to any Merit of ours: but the wiſe and holy Lawgiver diſpenſes the bleſſed Reward according to the Tenour of our good Works: and as by the excellence of the Reward he declares what value he ſets upon our Obedience; ſo by the exactneſs of our Obedience

we declare what value we ſet upon the Reward.

The Recompences of diſtributive Juſtice ſhall be according to the evil Works of Men. All Sins with the inhancing Circumſtances of Guilt ſhall be brought to Judgment; Sins of Omiſſion; *I was an hungry, and you gave me no meat; I was thirſty, and you gave me no drink,* ſhall be charged upon the Reprobates by the Judg himſelf. *To him who knoweth to do good,* Jam. 4. 17. *and doth it not, to him it is a Sin.* All Sins of Commiſſion, *whether ſecret or open*: God will *judg the Secrets of Men by Jeſus Chriſt*: The Sins concealed from the Eye of the Day,

Day, the Light of the Sun, and from the Eye of the Night, the Light of a Candle, ſhall then be made manifeſt: and all the notorious and infamous Sins, *Laſciviouſneſs, Luſts, exceſs of Wine, Revelings, Banquetings, and abominable Idolatry, Men ſhall give an account of to him, who is ready to judg the Quick and the Dead.* 1 Pet. 4.4,5. Sins of Thoughts and Words, as well as of Actions, ſhall then be remembred; the *vain Thoughts* that have *lodged in the Heart, and every idle word that hath been ſpoken by Men, they ſhall give an account of in the day of Judgment.*

The degrees of Puniſhment ſhall be correſpondent to Mens Sins: How much

they have lived deliciously and presumptuously, so much *Sorrow and Torment shall be given them.* The more rebellious, outragious, and obstinate Sinners now are, the more fearful Severities shall be their portion. *Those who know their Masters will, and do it not, shall be beaten with many Stripes.*

The Proceedings of that day shall be transacted by the Son of God in his glorified Humane Nature, and suitably to the Capacities of Men that the Justice of his Sentence may be evident: therefore St *John*, describing the process of the last Judgment, relates, *I saw the Dead, small and great, stand before God*; Rev. 20. 12.

and

and the Books were opened; and the Dead were judged out of thoſe things that were written in the Books, according to their Works.

The Records of Conſcience ſhall then be opened, and all the Sins of Men, even thoſe that are now obliterated and forgotten, ſhall then appear in ſo clear an Impreſſion, with all their Aggravations, that the wicked will be inexcuſable to themſelves, and Conſcience will ſubſcribe their Condemnation. The Judg himſelf who knows all things will then unfold the Regiſters of his Omniſcience, and publiſh their Sins before the World. *Then ſhall the*

the King ſay, I was hungry, and ye gave me no Meat; I was thirſty, and ye gave me no Drink: and by juſt Analogy we may infer he will charge Sins of all kinds upon the Wicked, of which they have been guilty, that the Righteouſneſs and Reaſonableneſs of his Proceedings may appear: he will overcome when he judges, the Condemned ſhall have nothing to reply, ſtruck into Silence and Confuſion: the Saints and Angels ſhall with Admiration magnify his true and righteous Judgments.

Applica-

Application.

The Doctrine of Christ's speedy coming to Judgment, should be a powerful Incentive to our most solemn and ready preparing for it. The Affair is infinitely serious, 'tis our incomparable Interest to secure the Favour of the Supream Judg: if we are cast in Judgment, our Misery is irrecoverable. There may be Errors in Humane Judgments, and other days of Trial to review and alter the Sentence; but the Judgment of the last day is irrevocable. And is it a slight matter to be saved or damn'd for

for ever? *Then the Children of this World are absolutely wiser than the Children of Light.* But 'tis not possible for the Mind of Man, unless monstrously perverted, to conceive such a Thought. From whence then is it, that the eternal Judgment is so unconsider'd, so unexpected, and unprepared for, by most of the World? *Should not the Excellence of their Judg make Sinners afraid?* His universal Knowledg, *for all things are naked and open to him, with whom we have to do;* His immaculate Holiness, *for he is of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity without aversation;* His incorruptible Justice *that will not spare*

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the guilty; His *Eternal Power* that can ſo eaſily and terribly revenge all wilful Diſobedience to his Law, and has been ſo inſolently contemned, all the Perfections of his Divine Nature, and the bleeding Sufferings of his Humane Nature to purchaſe Salvation ſo wretchedly neglected, will render their Judgment fearful and intolerable. *What will they do in the day of Viſitation? Can their Hearts endure, or their Hands be ſtrong in the day that he will deal with them?* Can they think to mitigate his hot Diſpleaſure, when his Clemency, ſo often deſpiſed, will inflame his Juſtice? All the Mercies which they have ſo

Eſa. 10. 3.
Ezek. 22.

ſo ungraciouſly abus'd, ſhall be produc'd in Teſtimony of their Rebellion, heighten'd with the moſt unworthy Ingratitude: What Conſternation will ſeize the Guilty, when ten thouſand Accuſers ſhall riſe up in Judgment againſt them, and not one Advocate appear for their Defence? Methinks the hearing ſuch terrible Truths ſhould make their Ears tingle, and their Hearts die within them, yet (O aſtoniſhing Security!) tho God ſpeaks ſo loud by the Voice of his Miniſters, and ſometimes by his powerful Providence, they are as deaf as Adders; but let a carnal Luſt whiſper within from

from their earthly part, they presently hear and are charmed. From whence is it that the Eternal Judgment, so sure as Death, does not cause an extream Apprehension in unpardoned Sinners? The next cause of this Stupidity is, that they *put the evil-day* at a remote distance, as the Scorners said, *the Vision is* Ezek.12.22. *for many days*: they study to be secure, and delay their Preparations, presuming to have time enough before them. Vain Men! how willingly do they deceive themselves? Can they be assured of the present Life one hour? Some in their impure Embraces, others at voluptuous Feasts

Feasts have been seized by Divine Justice: the day of Death is equivalent to the day of Judgment; for immediately after there is a final decision and actual disposing of Men for ever.

That we may therefore be duly prepared, these Directions are to be followed.

1. Let it be our special care to plant the Belief of this great Truth in our Minds, and preserve it in its Vigor, that we may feel its Efficacy and Influence in our Hearts and Lives. Customary Believers, whose assent to Divine Truths is only from the prejudice of Education, and the current Opinions of others

thers with whom they live, are as careleſs and ſecure as direct Atheiſt: The ſubſtantial Fruits of Godlineſs and Holineſs ſpring from internal Notions deeply eſtabliſh'd, and experimentally felt in the Soul. The uſual coldneſs in the Duties of Religion, and preſumptuous boldneſs in Sin, is becauſe Men have but a ſlite Belief of their great account. But we have infallible aſſurance from the Judg himſelf: *Behold, I come quickly: his Throne is like the fiery Flame, and his Wheels as burning Fire*, an Emblem of his ſwift coming to Judgment. The ſtedfaſt Belief of this will arreſt our vain Thoughts, and

controul our vicious Affections, and regulate our Converſations. Faith is the Principle of Fear; and Fear is a preventive Paſſion, it engages the Mind to conſider with becoming ſerioufneſs, how *to eſcape the Damnation of Hell.* Then we throughly believe this fundamental Principle of Religion, when the deſign and work of our Lives is to be approved by our Judg.

2. Moderation both in the Pleaſures and Buſineſs of the World is requiſite, that we may with intire Application of Mind prepare to appear before our Judg. 'Tis the aweful Caution of our Saviour to his Diſciples, *Take heed*

heed to your ſelves, leſt at any time, your Hearts be overcharged with Surfeiting and Drunkenneſs, and Cares of this Life, and ſo that Day come upon you unawares. For as a Snare ſhall it come on all them, that dwell on the face of the whole Earth. Watch ye therefore and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to eſcape all theſe things that ſhall come to paſs, and to ſtand before the Son of Man. Luke 21. 34, 35.

The univerſal Snares that faſten Men in ſecurity are ſenſual Pleaſures and Worldly Cares: They are natural and inſinuating into our Hearts. A diſſolute voluptuous courſe is attended with a ſtupid neglect of God and the Soul:

and the indulging of the Carnal Appetites, tho not in such vicious Excesses, as the notoriously profane are guilty of, lessens the fear of Caution, which is instrumental to make us serious and diligent, lest we be surprized in an unprepared State by the Judg of the World. The subtilty of Satan is to be observed, he does not tempt Men to take so deep a surfeit of Pleasures as might cause a loathing of them, but gently feeds the voluptuous diseased Appetites, knowing that a Sensual Life alienates the Mind from a severe reflecting upon the State of their Souls, and induces a deep forgetfulness of

of their Accounts with God. From hence it is, that the danger wherein ſo many are of loſing their Souls for ever, is not perceived till their caſe be deſperate.

Others are ſo involv'd in Secular Buſineſs, their Minds are ſo overſhaded with the Cares of the World, that they are not at leiſure to attend *to the one thing neceſſary*, and can take no right Aſpect of the World to come. Their Affections are ſtiff and ſetled in the Earth, their Thoughts are immerſt in the Affairs of this preſent Life; they think it their Diſcretion and Duty to ingage in the unceſſant proſecution of their Worldly

Deſigns, and the Devil takes this advantage to prevent in them the pity and care of their Immortal Souls: Or if at any time ſerious Deſires are kindled in them of Salvation, an inundation of Worldly Thoughts preſently quench them. Thus Men periſh by the abuſe of lawful things. The Flood broke in upon the old World whilſt they *were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in Marriage*, buying and ſelling, *and deſtroyed them all*: The laſt Fire will devour the preſent World in the ſame dull Incogitancy, and ſtupid neglect to prepare themſelves for Judgment. *As it was in the days*

days of Noah, *ſo it ſhall be in the days of the Son of Man.* Luke 17.26. The ſenſual and worldly-minded are uſually ſecure, and when they *ſhall ſay Peace and Safety, ſudden Deſtruction cometh upon them, as Travel upon a Woman with Child,* as ſurprizingly as irreſiſtably, *and they ſhall not eſcape.* 'Tis a divine and ſolemn warning, *Behold, I come as a Thief in the night, bleſſed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his Garments unſpotted from the World, leſt he be found naked without the Robe* of Holineſs, and be expoſed to confounding Shame in the great Day. Rev. 16.15.

3. The frequent and ſerious trial of Conſcience with reſpect to our ſpiritual State,

and the Actions of our Lives is requiſite to our preparing our ſelves for our laſt account: for there will be a a manifeſtation of them in that day. The moſt never ſpend a ſerious hour in conſidering whether they *are tranſlated from Death to Life.* The Rule of Judgment is declared by St. *John*; *He that hath the Son, hath Life: and he that hath not the Son, hath not Life.* The Juſtification of our Perſons from the guilt of our Sins, is wholly to be aſcribed to the Divine Mercy upon the account of his moſt precious Merits and Mediation: and all the ſaving Benefits purchas'd by his Death are actu-

actually applied only to those who are united to him by an unfeigned lively Faith. All the vital Influences of his Merits are derived from him to his Members: *he is the Head of the Church and Saviour of the Body.* His most precious Blood that was shed on the Cross, must be *sprinkled on the Conscience to purge it from dead Works: The Blood of sprinkling speaks better things than the Blood of* Abel. And the Faith that is saving is not a mere assent in Speculation to the Doctrine of the Gospel, but such a Belief in the Blessed Mediator of his reconciling us to God, as produces a superlative Love to him, and by

by that Love ſincere and uniform Obedience to his moſt holy Laws. By Faith we are juſtified from the Guilt of Sin, by Works from the Charge of Hypocriſy, in that we have ſincerely complied with the Terms of the Goſpel, by receiving intire Chriſt as our Lord and Saviour.

We can never with Comfort appear before the righteous Lord, if we have not an intereſt in him as the *Lord our Righteouſneſs.*

There are ſome of a Moral Temper and Civil Converſation that finally miſcarry, by their neglect of coming to Chriſt with earneſt hunger and thirſt after his Righte-

Righteouſneſs, which alone can endure the Trial of God's Judgment-Seat for our Abſolution: They have not ſuch a conſcious feeling of their undone Condition by Sin, as to make them earneſtly ſeek for a Remedy: the Deceiver of Souls inſinuates into their ſecret Thoughts, that they are ſafe enough, and ſhall ſtand in Judgment, becauſe they are not guilty of enormous Crimes; they rarely feel the laſhes of Conſcience, which thoſe who rebel againſt the clear Light do. But how fair ſo ever the Lives of Men appear, ſuch is the exact Purity of the Divine Law, ſo many known and ſecret Sins even

even the moſt circumſpect are guilty of, that without an intereſt in the Bleſſed Mediator, they will be caſt in Judgment for ever. 'Tis therefore of infinite Conſequence to examine our ſelves whether we are in a ſtate of Favour and Acceptance with God: the Jealouſy of many holy and tender Spirits ſuſpends the comfortable Judgment of Conſcience, and the vicious Self-love of carnal Perſons ſupends the condemning Judgment of it.

Beſides, the daily review of our Actions is of excellent uſe to prepare us for our laſt account. Conſcience is plac'd in our Boſoms as a vigilant

gilant Inſpector and Domeſtick Judg, to obſerve our Actions and compare them with the Rule, and accordingly to cenſure or approve us: When we fail in our Duty, and violate God's Precepts, it ſhould work upon the Affections of Grief and Shame, and cauſe us earneſtly to addreſs to the Throne of Grace for Pardon: and renew the Application of the Blood of Chriſt to our Souls. According to the quality of our Sins, our Repentance ſhould be more ſolemn and ſpecial, we ſhould more ſeverely judg our ſelves that we may *not be judged by the Lord.* This is very unpleaſant Work to carnal

nal Men: but 'tis the indiſpenſible Condition of obtaining pardoning Mercy: 'tis the moſt congruous way of recovering Sinners both for the Honour of God, and our Good, for the broken and contrite Perſon will moſt prize the Favour of God, and be moſt fearful of returning to Sin. Indeed then our *Repentance is unto Life*, when the dominion of Sin is ſubdued, and the way is forſaken. Now, the ſpeedy coming of our Judg ſhould recommend this ſevere Repentance to us: it ſhould excite Conſcience to the daily obſervation of our Errors, then when Sins are committed, we may be reſt-

reſtleſs till we get them pardoned: tho Men may ſuppreſs and ſmother the Convictions of Conſcience at the preſent, yet it will ſhortly, like a fierce and terrible Officer, take the Guilty by the Throat and command him to pay what he owes to Divine Juſtice. 'Tis our Wiſdom to compare the bitterneſs of Repentance with the Torments of Hell: Repenting Sorrow is for the cure of Sin, the Sorrow of Hell is for the Puniſhment of Sinners for ever. *Repent, that your Sins may be blotted out in the times of Refreſhment from the Preſence of the Lord.*

4. The perſwaſion of this Doctrine is an excellent means

means to obtain a calm and contented frame of Spirit in every State: For if we conſider within a little while all Civil Diſtinctions of High and Low, Rich and Poor, ſhall be at an end, and only the Moral Diſtinctions of Holy and Unholy, Righteous and Unrighteous, ſhall remain, that all muſt ſtand in an equal Line before the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt, to receive eternal Recompences, how will it vilify this World in our eſteem, and conſequently make a mean and low Condition tollerable to us? 'Tis related of *Julius Cæſar*, that being in a Storm at Sea, he was fain to ſtrip him-

himſelf naked and ſwim for his Life, carrying in one hand his Commentaries written by himſelf of his Military Actions: Within a ſhort time we muſt be deveſted of all the external Circumſtances of the preſent Life, Riches, Honours, Dignities, and of the Garment of our Fleſh, and our naked Souls ſhall only carry with them the Book of Conſcience, wherein all our Actions are recorded with our own Hands, into that vaſt Eternity before us: this ſhould make us more indifferent what our preſent State is, that we muſt ſhortly leave, and very ſollicitous to order our Converſa-

tion ſo as to be accepted of our Judg.

Particularly it ſhould render the Praiſe or Diſpraiſe of Men a very ſmall matter to us. Within a little while we ſhall only have to do with God, depend intirely upon him, and according as his Sentence ſhall be favourable or fatal, muſt be determin'd for ever; how reaſonable then is it in compariſon of his Judgment to diſvalue the contingent Opinions of Men, who raiſe or depreſs our Names according to their Fancies and Paſſions, and to be ſatisfied in God's Approbation.

5. The

5. The Conſideration of this Point ſhould encourage us joyfully to endure Reproach or Violence for the Teſtimony of Divine Truth, to ſuffer for Righteouſneſs ſake: for, as the Apoſtle comforts the ſuffering Chriſtians, *Within a little while, he that ſhall come will come, and will not tarry*; and will beſtow an excellent Reward in Heaven upon his faithful Servants. This, duly conſidered, will inſpire not only Patience, but Divine Joy in the Saints in their moſt afflicted State for the Name of Chriſt.

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Men, with Sincerity, Equity, Benignity, and Clemency. 'Tis the Apoſtles choſen Argument, *Let no Man go beyond, or defraud his Brother in any matter; becauſe the Lord is the Avenger of all ſuch. Let your Moderation be known to all Men, the Lord is at hand.*

1 Theſſ. 4. 6.

Phil. 4. 5.

To ſum up all: Let us with intire Application of Soul, and zealous Endeavours ſtrive to be approv'd by our Judg. *We labour,* ſaith the Apoſtle, *whether preſent or abſent, to be accepted by him.* The certain Rules of pleaſing him, are to imitate his Example, and obey his Precepts. He will be a Lamb to all who are

2 Cor. 5.

are like him in Innocence, Patience, and Purity. He *went about doing Good: let us do good to all, especially to the Houſhold of Faith.* To uſe an Eſtate only for mean Ends, our Temporal Conveniencies, much more to abuſe and pervert it, to foment Pride and Luxury, will make our Accounts to be uncomfortable, and grievous: but to be *liberal and rich in Good Works,* is the infallible way to obtain a rich Reward. He forgave his cruel and unrighteous Enemies; his dying Prayer mixt with his precious Blood was to reconcile God to thoſe who ſhed it; and our Abſolution in his Judgment is ſuſpended

upon this indiſpenſable Condition, that from the Heart we forgive even the moſt injurious Offences, and violent Provocations from others. An unforgiving Temper, like a Mill-ſtone faſten'd about the Neck, will ſink us into unfathom'd Miſery. He that is ſtiff and irreconcileable, either never ſeriouſly conſiders his own numerous Sins, or never receiv'd God's pardoning Mercy.

Mat. 6.

Let us uniformly obey the Commands of Chriſt. We muſt ſtoop to his Power as our Judg; *As I live ſaith the Lord, every knee ſhall bow to me, and every Tongue ſhall confeſs to God*; 'tis our Wiſdom there-

therefore to yield Obedience to his Authority as our Law-giver. *He is the Author of eternal Salvation to all who obey him.*

Let us faithfully improve all our Talents, all the means and advantages to ſerve and glorify him, for the Account will be ſtrict, and the Reward infinite. Briefly, let us learn this point of Wiſdom of our ſpiritual Enemy, who, becauſe his *time is ſhort*, is more active and vigilant to do Miſchief; ſo conſidering our opportunity of doing good is ſhort, and the omiſſion irreparable, *let us with zealous diligence always abound in the Work of the Lord, knowing* 1 Cor. 15.

that our Labour ſhall not be in vain in the Lord. O that Men were wiſe to conſider their Mortality and Immortality: to do thoſe things now, which in the laſt and great Day they ſhall wiſh they had done.

I ſhall now, as the preſent occaſion directs, ſpeak of the deceaſed Mr. *BENJAMIN ASHURST*, of whoſe Goodneſs there are very valuable Teſtimonies. He had the Felicity to be inſtructed and order'd in his early and obſequious Age by a wiſe and holy Father: and as uſually the gracious or vicious Habits of the firſt Age are transfuſed into the next, ſo his ſucceeding

ing Life was correſpondent to his Education. There is a fit reſemblance between the natural Culture of the Earth and the moral of our Minds: Three things are requiſite to make the Earth fruitful, a good Soil, good Culture, and good Seed; ſo by Analogy, that Education may be ſucceſsful, a well-diſpoſed Nature, an Underſtanding and good Inſtructer, and the Precepts of Religion and Vertue are neceſſary. All theſe concurr'd in the preſent Subject. Some by a rare Priviledg are exempted from thoſe tyrannous Paſſions that ſo frequently diſorder the Lives of Men; and in their Child-

Childhood are of ſuch mild and gaulleſs Spirits, ſo receptive of vertuous Impreſſions, that at the ſight of their Diſpoſitions and Carriage we may have a conjecture of the Felicity of the innocent State, of which one Ray, or rather Shadow, is ſo amiable. With ſuch a happy Temper God was pleaſed to endow our deceaſed Friend: his Spirit was humble, modeſt, gentle and complying with the Counſels of his gracious Father, who with tender Care led him in the way to Heaven. When he was grown up to the Age of Vanity, he was preſerved from *youthful Luſts*: His Converſation was unſtained: He was

was not ſwell'd with Pride, nor ruffled with Paſſion, nor diſorder'd with Exceſs. And as to a judicious Eye, no Spectacle is more deformed than an old Man in whom the Vices of Youth are notorious, levity of Mind, vehemence of Paſſions, and vanity in Converſation: So on the contrary, there is not a more amiable ſight, than a young Man in whom the Vertues of Age are conſpicuous; a ſtaid Mind, temperate Deſires, a compos'd Deportment: and it were happy for the World if fooliſh old Men were as rare to be found, as wiſe young Men.

This

This Praiſe-worthy Perſon, when fit to enter into a particular Calling, was placed in the Family of a Turky Merchant: there his Behaviour was ſo religious and ſerious, that it was ſaid of him by ſome that obſerved his Actions, that he would be a Merchant for Heaven. He after ſome time went to *Smyrna*, and preſerv'd his Integrity and Purity in the midſt of Temptations: where many by vicious Exceſſes diſparage the Sanctity of the Chriſtian Religion profeſs'd by them, he adorn'd it by the Sobriety of his Converſation. He return'd to *England* after ſome Years ſpent beyond Sea, and

and perſever'd in his Chriſtian Courſe, ſerious and ſolemn in his Carriage, and ready to do good to thoſe that wanted ſupplies from relieving Charity. A few Years after his return, he fell into a dying Conſumption that quickly put a Period to his Days. In his languiſhing Diſeaſe he expreſt an humble quiet Submiſſion to the Divine Diſpoſal: he was ſilent from murmuring, but not from Prayer, which he performed with ſolemn Reverence to the Lord of Life and Death even in his Weakneſs. When the hour of his Departure was come, he calmly render'd his Soul to his faithful Crea-

Creator. There is juſt cauſe of Sorrow that one in the Flower of his Age, of ſuch hopes, ſhould ſo ſuddenly wither and return to Duſt: if one old in Years and Vices, a Corrupter of others by his contagious Example die, the World is well rid of him: if a good Man *comes to the Grave in a full Age, like as a ſhock of Corn comes in his ſeaſon*, there is cauſe of Thankſgiving, that he was ſo long a Bleſſing to the World: But when a young Saint dies, that might according to expectation have long glorified God upon the Earth, and been a happy Inſtrument of doing good, we ſhould

ſhould pay our tributary Tears, and have a due and tender ſenſe of the general Loſs. Yet thoſe who are moſt nearly concern'd, and mournfully affected ſhould quiet their troubled Thoughts by conſidering the unaccountable Will of God, nay, comfort their ſad and dejected Spirits, by conſidering, that he has lived long enough in the preſent World, who by dying arrives to Perfection and Felicity.

FINIS.